by a number of butterfly species in which part of a brood becomes dormant while the remainder continues normal development (Scudder, 1889)? Perhaps this may allow these species to exploit marginally favourable periods while maintaining a reserve population for the usually favourable season . . ." Our reservations arise from the fact that in our experience the dormant pupae produced the imagines precisely during the period when conditions were dry, and it happens in El Salvador that the butterfly population diminishes to a minimum towards the peak of the dry season (February-April), and starts to build up again when the rainy season is well established (July onwards).

It is our opinion Papilionidae in El Salvador (and most probably elsewhere as well) have delevoped the faculty of producing adults at different intervals in order to ensure the continuity of the species in case of disasters destroying the existing active population. Something like humans, their popular wisdom has come to the conclusion: do not put all your eggs in one basket!

## Notes on a Colony of *Synanthedon vespiformis* L. (Yellow-legged Clearwing) in S.E. London (N.W. Kent) with Special Reference to the Breeding Site

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Whilst examining elm trunks with flowing sap, rot holes, etc., in an avenue just off Blackheath, on 29th July 1972, I came upon a fresh example of *S. vespiformis* at rest on a large rounded excrescence on the trunk of a wych elm — the first specimen of this handsome moth and I had met with in the district. Closer inspection of the woody swelling on later visits revealed quite numerous empty pupa-cases sticking up through emergence-holes which were scattered at random over it, but not one was to be seen outside its confines on the sound wood. The following year, however, a similar but smaller, smoother excrescence on the roots, just breaking through the soil, likewise had its quota of pupa-cases. The indications were thus of a strong but very restricted colony; and the peculiar preference shown was abundantly confirmed by the fact that on no other tree in the avenue, including fairly fresh stumps, was any sign of the species to be found by close scrutiny on any of the numerous visits made, except for a few more pupa-cases protruding from each of two much smaller swellings on nearby elms — the three trees that harboured the insect being the only ones in the avenue (out of a total of some 30) seen to be cankered. That the pupae

really were those of the clearwing was proved by breeding a moth from a living one dug out from under the surface; and a white larva earlier extracted from the large canker produced an identical pupa (enclosed in a tough leathery cocoon) though the imago failed to emerge.

On 11th August 1972, in bright afternoon sunshine, a second specimen was found resting on the large growth. It was very sluggish, but a third which arrived in about 15 minutes was far more alert. All four moths obtained were females, to judge by their dorsally yellow tail-fans. The spot is deeply shaded for much of the day and thus little suited for seeing the clearwings in flight — difficult at the best of times; possibly they ascend high into the trees for sunlight. During the two following seasons, though no more adults were encountered, the extruded pupal shells were again present in good numbers — showing the colony to be well established.

Further negative evidence serves to reinforce the noteworthy feature of this case: namely, that over the years, in the same district, on none of the several occasions when I have had suitable stumps of elm or other trees under observation for Diptera, etc., in ideal weather, have I ever seen a trace of *S. vespiformis* in any stage as one would expect to now and then (either as a moth, or larvae under bark of recently cut wood) — given the fact of its occurrence in the area. Everything, therefore, seems to point to its virtual restriction *in this district* to morbid excrescences on trunks (and notably on elm) as the breeding site.

I cannot help thinking that this is a habit of the species little known or seldom observed in our country, and Mr. B. R. Baker (of Reading), who is currently engaged in a study of the British Sesiidae, agrees. As to Continental authorities, he informs me that Seitz records the larvae "also in rough swellings and cancerous growths of old trunks" (but that the reference here is to oak) and lists also sweet chestnut, walnut and beech (under the bark) but, I understand, not elm. Of the few British works that I have consulted, only an early one (Newman) and a recent one (South, ed. 2) mention elm, but not in the context of these growths. Mr. Baker has examined the latter on oaks, but only found larvae in and under the bark of the stumps, which I believe is true of the majority of entomologists in Britain — certainly of myself up to the time of the experience reported above.

Finally I would draw attention to two apparent inaccuracies in the descriptions — again in respect only of those standard British works that I happen to have seen. First, they describe the legs as (largely) yellow (Meyrick, Barrett, South), from which one would naturally presume the femora to be (largely) yellow, nothing being said as to their colour; in fact *the femora are blue-black*. Second, they describe the caudal tuft of the female as almost or quite all yellow (Newman, Barrett, South); in fact *it is medially black beneath*, with some admixture

of yellow. These discrepancies, doubtless not very serious in themselves, did however lead me to wonder whether there could be two species mixed under the one name, and as beginners may be puzzled by them I think they should be pointed out.

## P. B. M. Allan: An American's Tribute

By Ronald S. Wilkinson
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Upon almost simultaneously receiving the April and May/June issues of *The Entomologist's Record,* I learned with great sorrow of the death of my friend and correspondent, P. B. M. Allan, on 31st December 1973.

Readers of the *Record* might be interested in a few facts about the life of the "Old Moth-Hunter" supplementary to those given in his April obituary. He was born in 1884, the son of Alexander Allan and Frances Ann Hamilton-Beattie. In 1914 he married Elsie Kate, daughter of James Whitehead. Having been employed as reader at Smith, Elder & Co. in 1912 and as assistant editor of *The Cornhill Magazine,* 1912-14, from 1919 to 1932 he headed the publishing firm of Philip Allan & Co. He was elected F.R.E.S. in 1944, and the date of his M.B.E. was 1945.

In his *Record* obituary, I.A. stated that Philip Allan was "the author of three books, *A Moth-Hunter's Gossip, Talking of Moths* and *Moths and Memories*". All this is true enough, but Mr. Allan's versatility was reflected in a number of other books, either written, compiled or translated by him. For lepidopterists he produced another volume, *Larval Foodplants* (London, 1949), a handbook of considerable utility. But Allan's interests ranged far afield from collecting sites. To collectors of rare books, he is best known as author of one of the standard volumes on the subject, *The Book-Hunter at Home* (London, 1920; 2nd ed., 1922). His chapters on the formation and care of a library of antiquarian books and his plea for specialisation in book-collecting helped to guide several generations of bookmen, and his book itself has now become uncommon and somewhat expensive due to the demand of present-day bibliophiles. In it, as in all his works, he demonstrated the wit and facility with language well known to readers of his entomological volumes. *The Book-Hunter at Home* was also published in the United States, where it was well received and is still enjoyed by American collectors. P. B. M. Allan was of course himself a discriminating and knowledgeable collector of books who wrote from experience.

Although his other volumes should receive but brief notice in an entomological journal, their range illustrates his versatility. *Trout Heresy* (London, 1936), a book for anglers, was published under his own name, but those who are familiar with his pseudonyms of "Old Moth-Hunter" and 'O.M.H." may